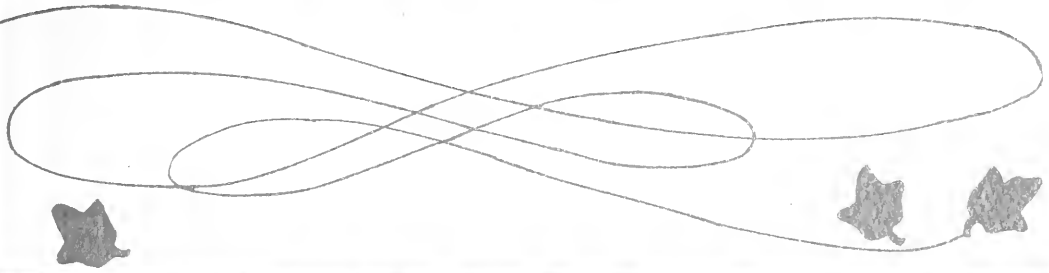


L E A V E S





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## **Eagle In Flight**

Among the Blue Ridge Mountains  
I drive, Feeling free like an eagle in flight  
Soaring high above the landscape in order  
to dive, silently down upon my prey in fright.

Feeling the wind beneath my wings I float,  
higher still to the blue sea above  
but not escaping the huge yellow eye  
that warms my wings as I fly.

Scanning with an experienced eye the  
valley below, I follow the river  
stitching the land like a white thread  
long and slow.

**--Fred Dangerfield**

## **Nine Years Ago**

Nine years ago?  
How can it be?  
Memory makes it seem  
like yesterday.  
Ordinary afternoon . . .  
and the world stopped,  
as the gun fired.  
Terrified, I wailed for Mama.  
A small boy, with fear  
filling his eyes, tried  
to help but it was over.  
Nine years?  
Pain still haunts me . . .  
Not for me but him  
Today.

**--Meg Roberts**

## Growing Up

A child of perfection, a child from love,  
Everyone knew he had strength from above,  
His deeds were tremendous, his thoughts superior,  
Children compared were clearly inferior.

Through him they saw so much that could be done,  
Surely, they thought, he would be the one,  
To carry out so many dreams,  
Of fame, fortune, and their fantasies.

But something changed,  
The perfection went away,  
His strength ended in an abrupt way.

The tasks became overwhelming,  
And that brought on rage,  
Oh, why can't we turn back the chapters of our lives,  
To another page.

Where is this child of yesteryear,  
The one adored and held so dear,  
Why did he have to go and change  
For with this adult we can't exchange.

--Bob Busby

## The Closed Pod

As told by Ensign Kerry Erickson

It has been twenty-three days since the accident. All ten of us are weary and we are looking at the hopes of rescue very grimly. We all know that another pod escaped the explosion, but after that, we do not have any idea as to what happened to it.

Captain Nichols hopes that Ajax made it to a planetary base or station.

I hope so, too. My wife is on that pod.

Each day, our oxygen supply runs down and our food packs seem to dissipate into the air. Each day the commander reassures us that we will make it to Earth. Each day my faith in the captain fades.

Ever since the trouble started, Captain Nichols has not quite been in his right mind. He has just about given all command responsibilities over to Commander Kirkwall. Not that I don't have faith in Kirkwall, but I have known the captain for years and have trusted him fully.

Until Now.

But, what do I know; I'm just a lowly ensign who has never even taken his position seriously.

Until Now.

I fight to survive each day. I breathe to the bare minimum to conserve air. I try not to get excited or expend wasteful energy. Perhaps I am sharing my consumption of air with the two who need it the most: Dawson and Cason. Dawson, our computer technician, works around the clock to recalibrate the computer star drive and set the ship's course so to navigate through the asteroid belt. Cason, at her communications station, sends out a distress beacon every fifteen minutes. Even though the main message is recorded, she has to change our position every fifteen minutes in the signal.

We are all frustrated. We all await death with a mixture of fear and resignation. Sometimes I look at the captain and see that look of failure spread across his figure, his movements are casual, almost as if he was reaching out for death's cold hand.

I refuse to give in.

I obey orders and carry them out to the best of my ability, hoping that if we survive this ordeal that I can move up in rank. However, that seems as far away as the Earth. I ask myself why this had to happen. I get no answer from myself or the crew, only from the blackness of space; the omnipotent universe cares little or nothing if a lowly human dies.

My source of comfort is our alien passenger, "Becker" Aktar, whose jovial sense of humor illuminates the pod's environment. He tries to tell jokes, human jokes, but his failure at it makes him funny. He is somewhat inarticulate and corny.

I go to sleep after my watch is finished. Chief Engineer Peterson relieves me on the pod's internal gantry and I climb into my makeshift bed. To my right, I can look out my viewport and see the asteroids pass by hurriedly. Commander Kirkwall must be pushing this bucket for all she is worth.

A loud crunch wakes me from my dream and I dash from my bunk, racing towards the command console. I find that our situation has gone from worse to impossible. The heat shield is gone. Dawson estimates that a particle of asteroid impacted with us and tore it away. Even if we reach Earth or an outpost, it would be impossible now to re-enter the atmosphere, much less soft-land.

In the morning, I feel somewhat better because Nichols has determined that we are less than eight hours away from Earth orbit. Already we are passing Mars and will have visual with the moon in about six hours. Enthusiasm rises in all of us. Aktar even gets better with his jokes. Our only hope is that we make contact with a merchant ship or military warship in orbit, because re-entry is out of the question.

The moon is beautiful and huge. I look at it as though I may never see it again. How can nature be so beautiful and uncaring at the same time? Davige breaks my reverie by telling me he needs a hand collecting our gear. My heart swells with anticipation. We are rescued! My heart hits the deck when he tells me no.

The next time will be for real, I tell myself.

Cason works the console over and over again, but to no avail; our signal must be weak. The solar cell packs need a recharger but there is not enough time, not enough oxygen. We are now getting in our suits.

Approximately two hours of oxygen left and no ship in sight. The earth is growing larger by the minute, but no contact, not even a yacht or cruiser.

To come so far and to be stopped here.

Twenty minutes left of orbiting. Surely they would have discovered us by now. Surely they would have.

The captain and Peterson make last-ditch preparations for a re-entry. It can't be done, the others say. There is no other choice, no other way. Help is not on the way.

Kirkwall and Ensign McDaniels steer this casket around where the sturdiest, most well-protected area of the pod faces the blue globe. Nichols gives the command to proceed and the ship lurches forward into the fiery atmosphere. Just as John Glenn experienced those glowing marks around his Mercury capsule over two-hundred years before, I wince at the sight of my "glowing marks." Everything is turning amber and it is getting hotter by each passing second.

Then everything goes black.

I open my eyes and see people hovering above me. Am I in heaven? No, these people aren't angels. I try to speak, but a woman, a nurse, I think, motions me not to. I hurt.

I'm alive. I'm alive! But how?

It isn't until later that a man from the Space Directory Center debriefs me, telling me that I was the only survivor of the ten aboard the escape pod. To all indication, I should be dead. He informs me that the pod was sighted breaking up just short of the North Atlantic Ocean. The others were either burnt to a crisp in the free fall or died on impact.

It is a miracle.

But I did not escape this incident unscathed: I have burns over sixty-percent of my body. But the tragedy is not my skin. That can heal with time.

My wife did not quite make it.

I thought I had cheated death and nature. I was wrong. Yes, I'm thankful that I am alive, but what is life without her?

In the past twenty-four days, I have learned my place in this vast universe, a place which I hold onto with fragile hands.

**--Christopher Parker**

## "Forever"

The sun was almost too bright . . .  
and the air almost too cool.  
Walking together, we met  
"forever"--found in each other.  
The sun grew dim,  
and the air burned hotter.  
One heart faded away  
while the other stayed  
locked in yesterday.

--Meg Roberts

I often stand alone;  
without a motion--  
without a thought or  
memory--

To smile when the  
world seems cold,  
and without my notion  
I want to die and  
cry awhile--

I sometimes slip--  
am pushed to hell--  
I sometimes ring and have  
rung the bell.

But just when I think  
I will fall into the  
boiling sea!

Standing tall yet  
symbolically--  
God extends his hands  
to me.

Tommy Harrell



## The Search

Mother, Mother, help me please,  
For I fear I am going mad.  
Life does not hold what I wish it to,  
And no part of my heart is glad.

Oh daughter, forget your cares and woes,  
And rest them on me for a while.  
A husband and children are all you need,  
To make your young heart smile.

Husband, Husband, help me please,  
My life is still empty and plain.  
For you and the children are not enough,  
And guilt now fills up my brain.

Oh wife, never worry your pretty head,  
I will build your world--as I should.  
Wealth and riches I will give to you,  
And all your wishes then will come true.

Doctor, Doctor, help me please,  
There's no joy in my life--only tears.  
With no reason to live, yet I cannot give in,  
I may take my own life now, I fear.

Oh girlie, don't fret or carry on so,  
It's anxiety that has you up tight.  
Your tears I can fix, with this little ole mix,  
That will soon put you out--like a light.

Lord, Lord, help me please,  
I just can't go on, I see.  
I have tried and I've failed, my life's no avail,  
And I beg you have mercy on me.

Oh child, I'm so glad you have called my name,  
I have purpose and need of thee.  
With my help you can find life's reason and rhyme,  
And joy in a life serving me.

--Penny Cobb

## To The One I Love

To the one I love,  
Who is so dear to me;  
The thoughts I share,  
I share with thee.

When we first met,  
We were so far apart;  
Now we are best friends,  
And touch each others hearts.

We've shared problems both good and bad,  
But together we conquered all we had;  
Soon we shall be on our way,  
To conquer the world another day.

I will never forget you, and wish you the best,  
For you deserve it and all the rest.

We shall meet again without dismay,  
Together in each others arms;  
To fulfill our destiny and there we'll stay.  
Never again to be alarmed.

Our lives will be filled with love and hope,  
Together, forever, we'll cope with hope;  
I give thanks to the one above,  
for giving me the one I love.

--John David Cooper



Mary Rowland



Tracy Goin



Wendy Webster



Chris Parker



Stephen Brogdon



Clarence Caudill





Dennis Schoen

**C**OURAGE, AUDACITY, AND REVOLT  
 Be THE WILL



ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS  
 OF OUR POETRY

**A**UGUST 1988

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SEPTEMBER  
 1st THURSDAY  
 5th FRIDAY  
 12th MONDAY  
 19th MONDAY  
 26th MONDAY

24

Stephen Brogdon

Life in the midst of failing  
Is like the rain from a thunderstorm;  
Though the storm may continue  
To discourage you, the sun is  
Destined to shine;  
And although a thunderstorm is  
An act of God which cannot be controlled,  
Life is a correlation in which  
God gives you the choice and  
Offers the Brightness of the Sun  
At all times--Rain or Shine.

So to achieve the brightness of the sun  
We look within ourselves  
To the innermost part;  
Our feelings,  
Whether good or bad,  
Have to be dealt with  
And not to be depended upon by others.  
Although one may feel insecure,  
They're not;  
The thought often occurs;  
But God is with us at all times.

--Mark Hopkins  
(student)

## Spring Festive

The old man has passed away into  
a hypnotic sleep.  
And the tender touch of mother  
has awakened the beauty in all nature.  
The honey sweet air roams through  
the fields as the wheat grass bows, and  
the wild flowers dance.  
All the birds are celebrating in song,  
the joy of homecoming,  
As the darting bees bounce back and forth  
like little thieves robbing  
the clovers of their sweet nectar.

--John J. Capitan, III

If ever there was a light  
That light would be mine!  
Love today, die tomorrow  
all in time--

But if life failed me--  
put me to the test--  
would I give up--  
Settle for less--  
NO--life has its ups and downs  
Its happy faces and dismayed frowns

But as I go through life  
I need a hand--  
Because the better is in  
he--who knows he can!

Tommy Harrell

## Boxes

There are some people I've kept  
Not anyplace you'd be able to see them  
And not because I don't care for you.  
They are in boxes like the ones  
in the attic with all the pictures in them.

They are the people who have touched me  
for a month or maybe thirty minutes,  
they do not equal you, you are the  
one I want to hold me when I cry.

They do not know me like you do, yet  
they know me like you never will.  
Don't be angry. Someone is always the  
teacher and someone is always the student.

And surely you'll be careful when you avoid the  
quiet child who tries to speak to you  
because someday you could become someone  
he's kept;  
not in clear view but in a box . . . .

--Bethany Bartenfield

## Sweet Love

For all the questions that have quizzed my mind,  
what makes you so sweet and special I'll never find.

Many men have tried to struggle, and some have persevered;  
but every time I walk alone I somehow need you near.

When the stress starts to eat at the fibers of my soul;  
it's you I find myself longing to hold.

I could search the world for a lover till I grow old;  
but why settle for silver when I can have gold?

My love the hourglass is turned and life's fading fast;  
just look to the future and don't worry about the past.

Just remember beauty cannot always be seen,  
like the love for you that lingers and for evermore leans.

--Daryl Simmons

From my darkened perspective

Suspended out of my place  
In time and into the dark  
Infinity of my earthshelf.

Forever waiting, forever patient  
As soft feathers form winter's  
Blanket until spring's showers  
Rinse away the traces of frozen turf.

Unending domicile  
Recipient of the summer rain god's artillery,  
Saturated until overfull.  
Waiting, waiting for the autumnal changes  
Which herald the crystal coverlet of my  
Retreat.

--Simms Brooks

## Without Lance

The morning sun gradually began to lighten the sky by highlighting the horizon with shades of soft pastels. The sharp outlines of the trees were etched against the background of the cloudless sky. As I lay in bed gazing out at this beautiful spectacle I hoped many more would follow. Lately it seemed that the designs of this morning's portrait was one of the best things about my days. It was a good way to start of in the morning hoping the continuation of the afternoon would be as brilliant.

I got out of bed after gazing out of the window and getting my thoughts together. The cold floor was a shock and caused me to scurry to the nearest throw rug I could get to. I went about my morning rituals that were necessary in order to prepare me for the world and the world for me. Since today was Saturday I took my time getting prepared for what activities I knew nothing of. Just after I had completed the bed making process the phone rang and abruptly piercing ring. I knew who it was--the same person who called every Saturday morning at 9:00--my best friend, Lance. He was always in a cheery mood justified by verifying the fact that we had made it through another week with a bit of sanity still lingering in the air. He suggested we drive to Hampton, which was only about an hour away.

He came by in his little red convertible, which I knew he was going to bring so this time I came prepared with a hat. His convertible was his one true love--yes, he loved me, but it was a sort of best friend kind of love. We had grown up together and both of us knew everything about the other. Lance had had a rough childhood--though he seemed very well-adjusted. I knew, though, that he had many deep emotional scars and had built up many walls, some of which he would not even let me penetrate. He dated many different women but vowed never to settle down and I believed him. He couldn't handle a relationship like that--he was far too "smart" for anything like that to ever take place. With me, though, it was different. I wanted to meet someone great, fall in love, and settle down. Lance thought it stupid and even went so far as to tell me he disapproved of some of the men I dated. It became quite annoying when he interfered so much to the point of embarrassing me.

I had met a man last week whom I was quite interested in. We had gone out last Saturday night and I hadn't heard from him because I had to leave quite abruptly and I didn't give him my number nor did I get his. I knew I would see him again, though, probably at the same place I had met him because I had seen him there several times before we had ever spoken. While we were in Hampton eating lunch, Lance kept telling me to just forget him, and that the guy wasn't about anything in the first place so I wasn't losing anything. I tried to avoid that subject so I wouldn't get angry and ruin the afternoon. We talked, drove around, shopped, and enjoyed the beautiful afternoon. On the way back Lance asked me if I would like to go out to dinner and maybe to see a movie tonight. I agreed, but on one condition--the top stayed up.

While I was getting ready Charles, the man I had met last week called. He had gotten my number from one of my friends who he saw me with. We talked for a while and he asked me if I wanted to do something that night. I forgot I had already made plans so I went ahead and accepted. After I hung up I remembered Lance. I called him and explained everything and he said fine and to have fun. Fun I had.

Charles and I drove to the beach and walked down the boardwalk and played games, ate cotton candy, talked, rode the ferris wheel, and walked on the beach. The next day I went over to see Lance and to tell him what a great time I had had, what all we had done, and what a great guy Charles was. He didn't seem too happy for me--actually he seemed quite indifferent and unconcerned. He acted strangely as the week progressed and even worse when I mentioned anything about Charles. I guess he was angry because I had been spending more time with Charles than I had had been with him. I tried to talk to him about it but he acted as though he had no idea what I was talking about. The more serious I became with Charles the more I lost touch with Lance. I rarely got to see him anymore and when I did he seemed very distant and even cold. I missed him and wished he could understand about Charles and I.

One night I had gotten in late after Charles and I had been out and there was a message on the answering machine from Lance. At first I was glad to hear his voice but then his message left me wondering how to feel. The message started off with him saying "Hey love! Just wanted to call and say I missed you and I love you and wish you had fallen in love with me instead. You never knew how I felt because I never wanted you to know, but you are the only woman I have ever loved but now it's too late. I'm sorry for putting you through all of this." Sorry for putting me through all this--what did he mean? I called over and no one answered. I tried several times to no avail. Finally, I asked Charles to drive me over to Lance's house because I felt as though something was wrong.

When we arrived, every light in the house was on along with the stereo system and television. The front door was locked but I had the key so I went in and walked through the entire house calling his name. No one answered so then I really started to worry. I walked outside and saw him lying in the hammock on the dock so I called to him but he didn't answer. I was tiring of this game so I walked out on the dock and started to tell him that none of this was funny. But once I saw him lying there I knew that none of it was meant to be a joke. His face was pale and his movements slow. He looked up at me and took hold of my hand and said he was sorry he had waited so long to tell me how he felt. Tears

started to rise in my eyes and I kneeled down and laid my head on his chest. He stroked my hair and told me not to cry but then he started to. I looked down and noticed something by my knee--it was a hypodermic needle that had some form of liquid dripping from the tip. I jumped to my feet and started shaking Lance yelling, "My God!! What have you done?--Lance--what did you do?!" He looked at me and said "I'm sorry--I love you." After that he did not respond. His hands grew limp and his head fell to the side. I started to scream but knew it was too late. Charles ran back into the house and called an ambulance and they arrived within ten minutes.

They carried Lance off on a stretcher while I sat in a daze. The sounds of the sirens faded and the reality of it all became overwhelming. I sat in a daze wondering why all of this had to happen. Charles sat with me and put his arms around me and rocked me and spoke to me like you would a child. He kissed me and squeezed me assuring me that everything would be all right-but how could it be . . . without Lance.

**--Jennifer Mons**

## Stark And Naked

Sunshine warms my  
cold heart until it  
swells with fire.

My blood  
races through tunnels,  
swooshing,  
at electrifying speed.

I see it in the distance.

Gray, cold and barren,  
it sits on top of the  
lushness, but  
no flowers adorn its body.  
"I'm naked" it screams,  
Making my eyes cast  
downward in shame.  
"I tell you of the most  
important person in  
your life," it mourns.  
I promise I will visit.  
I promise,  
I promise.  
I turn away,  
Already  
thinking of life ahead,  
not passed,  
forgetting my words.

--Caroline Weber



## The One I Left Behind

When I think of you my heart gets  
weak with the thought of our departure

I remember when we used to sit on the  
swings in the courtyard,  
And in the midst of the garden in the gazebo.

I remember our conversation of love, hope,  
and the future,  
but not once did we mention each other in our  
plans, for our lives were just beginning.

We shared my talks about the past and  
the present, we were in love, but not  
committed to each other, for we were just  
best friends and you did not realize that  
I was deeply in love with you.

I admired you for being so independent, and  
selfless. You gave all you had and expected  
nothing in return, you were a true friend,  
a loyal friend, and a loving, caring, compassionate  
friend.

I remember the moon lit walks by the  
pond, and how the ducks would follow you  
as if you were a goddess.

The times we spent together were full  
of love between two people in their own  
world of beauty, friendship, and love.

The most inspiring thing I remember  
about you is the love you helped me  
recapture. The love I had forgotten  
that existed in me.

And so, this is to the One I  
Left Behind.

I love you with all my heart,  
all my soul, and when we meet  
by and by I will hold you in  
my arms and love you more than  
I ever had loved you before.

--John David Cooper

## Free Verse

People are always busy.  
Always moving, grooving to the  
beat of a constant rhythm of the  
world--  
They walk closely together  
wounding and bumping each  
other--  
Are they making friends,  
no, money is all--  
Their faces are solemn as they  
trample the cement--moving so fast,  
the world is passing them by.

The streets are alive with zombies  
of success and failures--  
moving grooving to the beat of  
the world and never once hearing  
the music.

--Tommy Harrell

## Alone

A quiet place reflects  
the lingering day.  
Soft lights, empty space,  
and complete silence.  
Thoughts bouncing off the walls,  
feelings flooding the room.  
Time to sort, feel, and plan  
or maybe just time to be.

--Meg Roberts



